

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 11, 2018

Ms. Phyllis Smith
Regional Commissioner
Social Security Administration
Regional Public Affairs Office
600 West Madison Street, Floor 10
Chicago, Illinois 60661

Dear Commissioner Smith:

Thank you for providing my office with a briefing on the Social Security Administration (SSA)'s plan to close the Milwaukee Mitchell Street Social Security Office later this year. The closure of a federal office that provides direct customer service is a significant event. While I value knowing that all current staff of the Mitchell Street SSA will be transferred to other Milwaukee field office locations and no jobs will be lost, I have concern for any potential disruption in the ability of residents of southside Milwaukee to easily access in-person SSA customer service.

It is my understanding that this was a decision made after weighing many factors, including concerns for crime in the neighborhood and risks to public safety, as well as building maintenance and consistent access to the office that is compliant with the Americans with Disability Act. It goes without saying that public safety, the safety of employees and of SSA customers alike, is of critical importance. However, I am concerned that thousands of people who live in neighborhoods surrounding the Mitchell Street SSA may lose their opportunity to easily access in-person services provided by the current SSA location should it simply be closed.

I urge the SSA to postpone making this decision final until key stakeholders have had an opportunity to understand and address the concerns facing the Mitchell Street SSA office. It would be helpful if you would provide my office with additional information and address the below questions:

- How many people does the Mitchell Street SSA office currently serve each month? Of the people served, how many come into the office in-person compared to being served via phone or internet?
- What is the specific nature of complaints and concerns for safety and security of the Mitchell Street SSA? Have complaints primarily come from SSA staff, customers, or both?
- What actions have been taken to make the current location more safe, secure, and accessible?

- What actions have been taken by the SSA, in cooperation with the General Services Administration (GSA), to find an alternative location for a southside Milwaukee office location?
- Has the SSA/GSA worked with City of Milwaukee or Milwaukee County government leaders to address concerns or identify solutions? And if not, would SSA/GSA be open to such collaboration?

For over 80 years, the Social Security Administration has provided financial protection to our nation's older adults and people with disabilities. The SSA plays a key role in the well-being of our communities and I believe it is of great importance that all citizens have direct access to the services and benefits administered by the SSA. I am eager to work with you to find solutions that ensure that all residents of Milwaukee continue to have direct access to SSA services.

Please stay in touch with my office on these efforts, directing your communication to Tiffany Henry and Mike Helbick in my Milwaukee office at 633 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1920 -- Milwaukee WI 53203; via phone 414-297-4451; or email Tiffany_Henry@baldwin.senate.gov or Mike_Helbick@baldwin.senate.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tammy" and last name "Baldwin" clearly distinguishable.

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

TB:sba

Social Security Administration (Milwaukee Mitchell Field Office) Lease Procurement History
1/14/18

Current Lease:

- 1710 S. 7th St., Milwaukee, WI (2nd floor of a multi-tenant building)
- 2.1 miles SW from the SSA downtown Field Office and 6.9 miles from Greenfield location
- GSA Lease LWI16874
- Lease Term: 11/27/02 - 11/26/2022 (20 years, 10 years firm)
- Termination rights effective 11/26/12 with 90 days notice
- 8,670 usf/10,102 rsf

New Lease Requirements:

- 9,019 usf/10,372 rsf of contiguous space on a single floor
- Public transportation must be accessible within ¼ mile of the building
- Prefers 1st floor space but can be on the 2nd floor and above as long as the building has 2 working elevators that both the public and employees can access
- Building must be in a professional environment (i.e. zoned commercial). No warehouse/ industrial space.
- Parking for SSA's clientele (public community) must be available
- Lease Term: 10 years (5 years firm)
- Delineated area:
 - o North: National Avenue
 - o South: Layton Avenue
 - o East: Lake Michigan
 - o West: 27th St/S. Layton Blvd

Lease Project Timeline:

10/23/15: Security issues and maintenance issues were reported to GSA at this location by SSA. Specifically, that the requirement for 2 elevators to function at all times was not being met at all times and that there were security concerns related to the building and as well as ongoing crime in the area. GSA Service Center, GSA Real Estate Division and DHS-FPS met to discuss this lease location and building. In addition, GSA had discussions with the Landlord to relay the Government's concerns regarding the ongoing building maintenance issues and the ongoing crime in the area and in the building.

12/7/15: GSA places preliminary ad ("expressions of interest") in FedBizOpps (FBO). Only 2 responses were received. GSA also researches the market (via CoStar).

12/9/2015: SSA provided GSA with the official space requirements (SF-81 package) for 9,019 ABOA SF for a 10 year term/5 years firm lease term. SSA indicated that they could not increase the lease term as they needed flexibility in regards to the Milwaukee Service Areas (so that they can be able to address any increases/decreases in staffing in their Milwaukee area field offices).

1/19/16: GSA places formal ad into FBO. GSA receives 3 responses (b) (3) (A)

1/20/16: GSA Lease Contracting Officer (LCO) visited the existing SSA location as part of a two day driving tour (window canvassing) and evaluation of the market area in and beyond the specified delineated area. The purpose of the window canvassing was to get a preview of potential/available locations. Several additional locations were found, but upon discussion with the building contacts, space was already committed to other tenants or not suitable for the intended use. One (b) (3) (A) site with a building under construction was found that was not listed in CoStar.

2/1/16: GSA reaches out to Mayor Barrett (via email with copy of the ad) indicating GSA was starting a lease procurement and directed any questions to either the LCO or Team Manager. The City office referred GSA to a Mr. Sam Leitching (City Development office) to discuss GSA's space needs.

2/12/16: GSA goes on another window canvassing tour and drove entire delineated area (as well as outside the area) and only found one space that did not respond to the expression of interest and the ad. LCO noted that there was a shortage of commercial office space within the delineated area and that the delineated area was primarily residential and retail. The following 2 locations were found during the window canvassing:

- (b) (3) (A) retail center (could not meet GSA's fire/lifesafety regulations due to the depth of the space. The large retail space would have to be renovated to include internal corridors so

(b) (3) (A) ted
A little outside the delineated area
but GSA indicated that this location should be viewed on a market survey

2/24/16: GSA called and emailed (attaching a copy of the ad) Mr. Sam Leitching (with the City of Milwaukee Dept. of City Development), to discuss the SSA Milwaukee (Mitchell) procurement and requested assistance in locating potential locations that would meet SSA's long term requirements. GSA indicated that they had very few responses to the ad.

2/24/16: Mr. Leitching emailed GSA indicating the City is undertaking a corridor plan for south 27th street in 2016 and will share the LCO's email address so that he can get updates. Mr. Leitching also forwarded a contact name/number regarding the (b) (3) (A) location. Mr. Leitching requested GSA and the City to keep brainstorming.

3/10/17: Conducted additional market research and found the following 2 locations:

(b) (3) (A) the north delineated area
Added this location to the market survey itinerary

3/17/16: GSA, SSA regional and local office, and DHS-FPS attended a market survey that viewed four properties (including the existing property). As a result of that market survey, three properties were eliminated as they did not meet the minimum technical requirements of SSA's space needs. The only location that met SSA's long term space needs was the (b) (3) (A)

Unacceptable:

- 1710 S. 7th Street (existing location): High level crime area (public safety); does not meet minimum use, ongoing elevator issues (non operational); renovation of space (that will be needed to meet SSA's current space standards/specs) will be disruptive to staff
- (b) (3) (A): Strip mall center; space is more than twice as long as wide (making furniture design/layout inefficient)

(b) (3) (A) on story building; building not visible from 27th street; accessibility to building is difficult; no direct sidewalk or driveway leading to the building; not easily accessible by visitors.

Acceptable:

- (b) (3) (A):

4/14/16: The one approved site (b) (3) (A) was solicited and work to receive a qualified offer continued up through August 2016. After multiple attempts to get an offer and a response, the owner's rep then stated they had leased the entire property to an (b) (3) (A) with a longer term lease commitment as well as obtain a retail type tenant (it was indicated that the Owner was not interested in turning the building into an office building and wanted a retail tenant). SSA was informed that there were no viable offers at that point.

May – October 2016: GSA re-reviewed the market again which yielded no additional locations/sites. There is no GSA controlled vacant federal and/or lease space. It was noted that the delineated area included a mature area of Milwaukee, with very little interest from the development community to build speculatively and/or retrofit stand alone office buildings. There is no professional office space in the delineated area and the market is retail based.

12/9/16: Team Manager reached out to the City (Teddy Benis) requesting a conference call with the Commissioner of Dept. of City Development (Rocky Marcoux). Mr. Benis indicated that Mr. Marcoux was not available until the following week.

12/13/16: The GSA Team Manager and LCO and Mr. Marcoux discussed the requirements during a conference call. Mr. Marcoux indicated that he was not aware of any new locations that would meet SSA's requirements within the specified delineated area. GSA asked if there was any available space within the city or county buildings. Mr. Marcoux indicated that there was no space in the county and/or

city buildings that would meet SSA's requirements. The City indicated that it is very difficult to find viable locations that would meet GSA's space requirements (needing a minimum of 9,019 contiguous usable square feet of space, needing 2 accessible elevators if located on the 2nd floor and above and the limited delineated area), especially the fact that SSA is restricted (due to other adjacent Service Areas) in expanding the delineated area with Greenfield (6.9 miles away) and Milwaukee DTN (2.1 miles away) being so close. However, Mr. Marcoux indicated that he would continue to keep an eye out and reach out to GSA if potential locations can be identified.

Early January 2017: GSA conducted market research again to see if anything new popped up in the market that could meet SSA's minimum space needs/requirements and reached out to various locations. GSA reached out to the (b) (3) (A) however, the building indicated that this mixed use (office, retail and residential) is for "high end" tenants and they were not interested in having a public facing government office in their building.

January 2017: GSA determined that there is no office space or suitable other space within the delineated area to meet SSA's long term requirement. Southeast Milwaukee is a primarily residential area and very close to the Milwaukee central business district/downtown, so office requirements are generally filled in the downtown area. There is also no market speculative (new development of office buildings) office space in the delineated area. Limited retail can be available in this area from time to time, but the short term of the Government's requirement (10 years (5 years firm)) is not attractive to retail developers or building owners. SSA indicated that they could not increase the lease term as they needed flexibility in regards to the Milwaukee Service Areas (so that they can be able to address any increases/decreases in staffing in their Milwaukee area field offices). In addition, it is extremely unlikely that new construction can be obtained given the limited commitment of a 10 year/ 5 year firm lease. GSA has conducted multiple market tours, conducted ongoing market research, and reached out to both the market as well as the City of Milwaukee multiple times.

1/25/17: GSA Team Manager notified SSA that GSA has exhausted all efforts locating viable prospects/locations that would meet SSA's long term space requirements. Project is placed on hold by SSA.

GWEN MOORE
4TH DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES
HOUSING AND INSURANCE
MONETARY POLICY AND TRADE, RANKING MEMBER

COMMITTEE ON BUDGET

DEMOCRATIC STEERING AND
POLICY COMMITTEE



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MILWAUKEE, WI 53202
(414) 297-1140
FAX: (414) 297-1086

Congress of the United States House of Representatives

January 24, 2018

Mr. John Cooke, Acting Regional Administrator
U.S. General Services Administration
Great Lakes Region Five
230 S Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60604-1505

Dear Mr. Cooke,

I am writing to request information regarding your agency's involvement in the lease procurement for the Social Security Administration (SSA), Mitchell Street Branch Office located at 1710 S. 7th Street, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Regional Communications Director Doug M. Nguyen and Area Director Chris Churchill recently informed me of the closing of the SSA office located in my congressional district. Mr. Nguyen stated that the SSA, GSA, along with the Department of Homeland Security and Federal Protective Services made the decision to close this office.

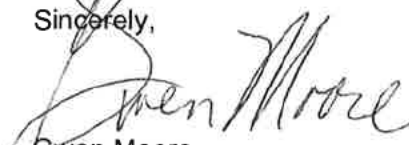
I have received concerned calls from City of Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and Alderman Jose Perez. Mayor Barrett has informed me of available space for relocation of the Mitchell Street Branch at the newly built Milwaukee Public Library building located at 906 W. Historic Mitchell Street. The entire second floor is currently vacant and available. I would like to hear from you on whether this space can be considered.

The City of Milwaukee's south side is home to the largest Hispanic population in the state. The Mitchell Street Branch Office provides services to constituents with limited English ability. The closing of this office not only takes away much needed resources and services to the community, but it also creates a challenge to accessing services at the other SSA Branch Offices. My constituents on the south side in zip codes 53204, 53207 and 53135 (City of St. Francis) need these services to be accessible.

Please provide my office with information on the sites GSA identified and the findings on those sites as well as whether the space at the Milwaukee Public Library Building is being considered for relocation. Losing the services and resources the Mitchell Street Branch provides will be detrimental to my constituents in these three zip code areas.

Thank you for your assistance and attention to this request. Please contact my Casework Supervisor, Maria Kasperski at (414) 297-1140 or by e-mail at Maria.Kasperski@mail.house.gov with any questions.

Sincerely,



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

GM/MK

Cc: Mayor Tom Barrett

Cc: Alderman Jose Perez

Cc: Phyllis M. Smith, SSA Regional Commissioner



January 25, 2018

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives – 4th District
2245 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Moore,

This letter is in response to your January 24, 2018 inquiry regarding the General Services Administration (GSA) lease procurement to locate office space for the Social Security Administration (SSA) Milwaukee Mitchell Street Branch.

The following locations were identified during the procurement:

- (b) (3) (A) : Did not meet SSA's technical requirements
Outside the required delineated area
- (b) (3) (A) : Did not meet SSA's technical requirements
- (b) (3) (A) : Building indicated they were not interested in housing a public facing government office in this mixed use building
- (b) (3) (A) : Owner indicated that they were not interested in renovating the building into an office building and was already working with a retail tenant

On January 17, 2018, GSA received official notification from SSA of their decision to close the Milwaukee Mitchell office. Please be advised that GSA did not make the decision to close the SSA Milwaukee Mitchell office as we are not responsible for making any federal agency office closure decisions. As there is no longer a need for a lease space action, GSA cannot consider the 906 W. Historic Mitchell Street location.

GSA conducted multiple market searches, window canvassing, and market surveys as well as multiple contacts to the City of Milwaukee. GSA exhausted all efforts locating viable locations that would meet SSA's long term space needs.

Sincerely,

John Cooke

[Region name]
U.S. General Services Administration
[Address Free Text]
[Address Free Text]
[Address Free Text]
[City, State, Zip Code, USA]
www.gsa.gov



Acting Regional Administrator
General Services Administration

[Region name]
U.S. General Services Administration
[Address Free Text]
[Address Free Text]
[Address Free Text]
[City, State, Zip Code, USA]
www.gsa.gov

DATE

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives
2245 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Moore:

This letter is in response to your January 24, 2018, inquiry regarding the General Services Administration's (GSA) efforts to locate office space for the Social Security Administration (SSA) office currently located on Mitchell Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In December 2015, GSA began a lease procurement to locate a suitable location for SSA's Mitchell Street Branch Office. GSA exhausted all efforts to locate office space that would meet SSA's long term needs, including conducting market searches and surveys, canvassing efforts, and working directly with the City of Milwaukee's Department of City Development. A list of locations identified and evaluated during the procurement, as well as reasons for not being considered, are below.

- 1710 S. 7th Street (existing location) - Did not meet SSA's technical requirements
- (b) (3) (A) - Did not meet SSA's technical requirements
- (b) (3) (A) - Did not meet SSA's technical requirements
- (b) (3) (A) - Outside required delineated area
- (b) (3) (A) - Building was not interested in housing a public-facing government office in this mixed-use building
- (b) (3) (A) - Owner provided an initial offer, but eventually withdrew the offer in order to lease space to a competing retail tenant

On January 17, 2018, GSA received official notification from SSA of their decision to close the Mitchell Street Branch Office. Please note that that GSA is not responsible for making federal agency office closure decisions and was not part of the decision to close the Mitchell Street office.

Additionally, at the the time of the procurement, the 906 W. Historic Street Mitchell Street location was not identified as a potential solution, nor was GSA made aware that the location was available. Moving forward, GSA is unable to consider that location without a space requirement from SSA.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 501-0563.

Sincerely,

Brennan Hart
Associate Administrator



SOCIAL SECURITY

Office of the Regional Commissioner
600 W Madison St, 10th Floor
Chicago, IL 60661
312-575-4000

January 30, 2018

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator
633 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1920
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Dear Senator Baldwin,

Thank you for your letter of January 11, 2018, regarding the Social Security Administration's (SSA) plan to consolidate the Milwaukee Mitchell Office, located at 1710 S. 7th Street into nearby offices. SSA is committed to providing quality customer service in an accessible and safe environment for our employees and the public we serve. I appreciate your concerns and want to address the questions you raised.

Currently, approximately 2,200 visitors per month came to the Mitchell Office for in-person service. Of those visitors, nearly 50 percent came from outside of Mitchell's service area zip codes of 53204, 53207, and 53235. The Mitchell office also serves approximately 228 callers each month through SSA's 800-number and Mitchell's in-office telephone line. Additionally, over 53 percent of Mitchell's benefit claims are filed online. We are confident we can comfortably provide quality service in one of our four nearby offices moving forward.

Our concerns with the current facility unfortunately are numerous. The current facility lacks secure parking and experiences frequent accessibility challenges with an undependable elevator and no stairwell access for the public. Concerns have been raised on numerous occasions, both by SSA staff and members of the public. In 2017 alone, there were at least 8 recorded incidents of elevator breakdowns (including multiple instances of employees or members of the public being stuck in the elevator), and another 9 instances of the heat not working properly or building entry doors not closing properly. We have also witnessed a number of violent crimes in and around the building that give us significant concern for the safety of our employees and visitors.

Since 2015, we have worked with GSA, who is responsible for securing space for the agency, to address our concerns over the ongoing facility maintenance and safety issues at Milwaukee Mitchell. GSA has been unsuccessful in their attempts to have the lesser adequately address our concerns and furthermore has indicated that they do not believe a permanent solution can be found at the current location. GSA conducted an exhaustive search to find alternate space in this service area to meet SSA's requirements, but those efforts have proven unsuccessful as well.

The inability to locate other suitable space along with security and safety concerns, left us with no choice but to merge this service area with other nearby offices. Our plan is for the Milwaukee Mitchell Field Office to be closed for business on Thursday, March 22, 2018. Mitchell employees will report to surrounding field offices for business on Monday, March 26, 2018. SSA will continue to maintain 4 offices within a 8-mile radius of the current office. All offices are easily accessible via public transportation. The reassignment of Milwaukee Mitchell employees to surrounding field offices will provide a stronger balance in workloads and staffing among those offices to better meet the needs of the local community. We also provide free interpreter services to help people conduct their Social Security business. These interpreter services are available whether they talk to us by phone or in any Social Security office.

We are fully committed to informing the public about the consolidation and ensuring a smooth transition for our employees. Public notification will be done in February-March through the efforts of key community stakeholders. We will meet with staffs at key social service agencies and third party representatives and provide them with copies of the attached public notification flyers, available in both English and Spanish, to distribute to their clients. We will also have signs posted at the office and issue a press release prior to the office closing.

If I can provide additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Staff contact can be made through our Regional Communications Director, Doug Nguyen at (312) 575-5354.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Phyllis M. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Phyllis M. Smith
Regional Commissioner

Enclosures

GWEN MOORE
4TH DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES
HOUSING AND INSURANCE
MONETARY POLICY AND TRADE, RANKING MEMBER

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MILWAUKEE, WI 53202
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FAX: (414) 297-1086

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

January 24, 2018

Mr. John Cooke, Acting Regional Administrator
U.S. General Services Administration
Great Lakes Region Five
230 S Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60604-1505

Dear Mr. Cooke,

I am writing to request information regarding your agency's involvement in the lease procurement for the Social Security Administration (SSA), Mitchell Street Branch Office located at 1710 S. 7th Street, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Regional Communications Director Doug M. Nguyen and Area Director Chris Churchill recently informed me of the closing of the SSA office located in my congressional district. Mr. Nguyen stated that the SSA, GSA, along with the Department of Homeland Security and Federal Protective Services made the decision to close this office.

I have received concerned calls from City of Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and Alderman Jose Perez. Mayor Barrett has informed me of available space for relocation of the Mitchell Street Branch at the newly built Milwaukee Public Library building located at 906 W. Historic Mitchell Street. The entire second floor is currently vacant and available. I would like to hear from you on whether this space can be considered.

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Please provide my office with information on the sites GSA identified and the findings on those sites as well as whether the space at the Milwaukee Public Library Building is being considered for relocation. Losing the services and resources the Mitchell Street Branch provides will be detrimental to my constituents in these three zip code areas.

Thank you for your assistance and attention to this request. Please contact my Casework Supervisor, Maria Kasperski at (414) 297-1140 or by e-mail at Maria.Kasperski@mail.house.gov with any questions.

Sincerely,

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

GM/MK

Cc: Mayor Tom Barrett

Cc: Alderman Jose Perez

Cc: Phyllis M. Smith, SSA Regional Commissioner

DATE

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives
2245 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Moore:

This letter responds to your January 24, February 6, and February 27, 2018, inquiries regarding the General Services Administration's (GSA) efforts to locate space for the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Mitchell Street Office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In December 2015, at SSA's request, GSA began a lease procurement to find a location for SSA's Mitchell Street Office. GSA worked to locate office space that would meet federal requirements and SSA's long term needs by conducting market searches and surveys and working directly with the city of Milwaukee's Department of City Development.

Six locations were identified during the search. Those locations, however, either did not meet minimum space requirements or did not submit an offer. Also, disclosure of those specific locations GSA evaluated would compromise the past procurement. After search efforts yielded no results, on January 17, 2018, SSA notified GSA that it would close the Mitchell Street office. On the basis of SSA's decision, GSA terminated the existing lease, effective May 31, 2018, as the lease required a 120 day notification.

With regard to the 906 West Historic Mitchell Street and 1432 West Forest Avenue locations, GSA does not plan to review additional locations for the SSA Mitchell Street Office since SSA no longer has a need for space.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me at (202) 501-0563.

Sincerely,

Brennan Hart
Associate Administrator

GWEN MOORE
4TH DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES
HOUSING AND INSURANCE
MONETARY POLICY AND TRADE, RANKING MEMBER

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MILWAUKEE, WI 53202
(414) 297-1140
FAX: (414) 297-1086

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

February 6, 2018

Mr. John Cooke
Acting Regional Administrator
U.S. General Services Administration
230 S Dearborn St
Chicago, IL 60604-1505

Dear Mr. Cooke,

I recently wrote to you concerning your agency's involvement in the lease procurement for the Social Security Administration (SSA), Mitchell Street Branch Office located at 1710 S. 7th Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

I am requesting that you consider conducting an assessment of the available vacant second floor space located at 906 W. Historic Mitchell Street in the building where the newly relocated Milwaukee Public Library is housed. In my previous letter I informed you of my communication with City of Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and Alderman Jose Perez and their concerns on the closing of the SSA Branch Office. Both officials recommended the space located at 906 W. Historic Mitchell Street as a site for relocation of the SSA Branch Office.

The closing of this office and the loss of very much needed services to the residents on the South Side of Milwaukee and also the City of St. Francis is concerning to me. My constituents depend on the Mitchell Street Branch Office for services in Spanish as well as resources. The proximity of the site at 906 W. Historic Mitchell Street is accessible and convenient for my constituents in zip codes 53204, 53207 and 53135.

Please give my request your careful attention and consideration. I look forward to hearing from your office. If you have any questions, please contact my Casework Supervisor, Maria Kasperski, at (414) 297-1140 or by e-mail at Maria.Kasperski@mail.house.gov.

Thank you for your continued assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gwen Moore".

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

GM/MK

Cc: Mayor Tom Barrett
Cc: Alderman Jose Perez



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Effective March 22, 2018 the Milwaukee Mitchell Social Security Office will be closed.

We apologize for any inconvenience.

Social Security services are available:

Online at [socialsecurity.gov](https://www.socialsecurity.gov)

or by telephone at (800) 772-1213 [TTY (800) 325-0778]

In-person services are available at these nearby Social Security Offices:

Milwaukee Downtown

310 W Wisconsin Ave Suite 260
Milwaukee, WI 53203
→ Distance: 3 Miles

Greenfield

8455 W Layton Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53228
→ Distance: 8 Miles

Milwaukee North

6300 W Fond Du Lac Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53218
→ Distance: 8 Miles

Milwaukee West

5020 W North Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53208
→ Distance: 6 Miles

*** Social Security offices' hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. On Wednesday, the offices close to the public at Noon.**

Media Inquiry - Milwaukee SSA office closure - WTMJ

Incoming date: 2/21/2018

CLOSED: 2/21/2018 4.21pm

Office	<i>Name, Date, Time of Approver</i>
SME approval	
R5 PBS	Robert Nawrocki, for John Cooke 02/21/18 01:20PM CDT
OCIA	Jeff Post 2/21/18 4pm
PBS	
OSC	Pam Dixon 2/21/18 4:10pm

Background:

SSA office in Milwaukee is closing on March 22. GSA received a congressional inquiry from Congresswoman Gwen Moore regarding this, as there is concern the closing would affect SSA service/access to people living near that office. A press conference is scheduled for Feb. 21, with Cong. Moore, Mayor Barrett and AFL-CIO expecting to be in attendance.

Name and contact information for the journalist

Elise Preston

WTMJ

614-329-0166

elise.preston@tmj4.com

Journalist deadline

Feb. 21, by 1pm

Summary of what is being asked and/or specific questions; whether the journalist wants an interview or needs questions answered.

- Are there plans to have another office open nearby or be built
- With the office closing on March 22, do you know how long it takes to open a new office once one closes?

NEW STATEMENT - Cleared by OCIA:

In December 2015, at SSA's request, GSA began a lease procurement to find a new location for SSA's Mitchell Street Branch Office in Milwaukee. GSA worked to locate office space that would

meet federal requirements and SSA's long term needs by conducting market searches and surveys and working directly with the City of Milwaukee's Department of City Development.

After search efforts yielded no suitable results, SSA notified GSA on January 17, 2018, that it would close the Mitchell Street office. GSA will assist as needed in relocating the SSA Mitchell Street office employees to surrounding offices and will work with SSA in meeting its real estate needs. At this time, GSA does not have a request from SSA to begin a new search for another office location in Milwaukee.

OLD RESPONSE

The U.S. General Services Administration works to assist the Social Security Administration with its real estate needs. GSA will assist as needed in relocating the Milwaukee Mitchell Street SSA office employees to other nearby SSA offices. At this time, GSA does not have a request from SSA to begin a new search for another office location in Milwaukee.

SSA RESPONSE TO MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL:

Social Security will close its Milwaukee Mitchell field office located at 1710 S. 7th Street, effective March 22, 2018, due to ongoing facility maintenance and safety issues. While we are vacating the space, all employees of the office will relocate to surrounding offices. The General Services Administration (GSA) has been unable to find suitable replacement space in the vicinity.

Residents living in the Milwaukee Metro service area may conduct business at any Social Security office. The nearest offices are located at:

Milwaukee Downtown

[310 W. Wisconsin Ave.](#)
[Milwaukee, WI](#) 53203

Greenfield

[8455 W. Layton Ave.](#)
Greenfield, WI 53228

Milwaukee North

[6300 W. Fond Du Lac Ave.](#)
Milwaukee, WI 53218

Milwaukee West

5020 W. North Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53208

Social Security office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. On Wednesdays, the offices close to the public at Noon.

Most Social Security services do not require a visit to an office. Milwaukee residents wishing to apply for benefits, sign up for direct deposit, request a replacement Social Security or Medicare card, obtain a proof of income letter or inform Social Security of a change of address or telephone number may do so at [socialsecurity.gov](https://www.socialsecurity.gov) or contact the agency's toll-free number: **1-800-772-1213** (TTY **1-800-325-0778**).

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 22, 2018

Commissioner Phyllis Smith
Regional Commissioner
Social Security Administration
Regional Public Affairs Office
600 West Madison Street, Floor 10
Chicago, Illinois 60661

Dear Commissioner Smith:

We join together today to express our ongoing concern over the Social Security Administration's (SSA) planned closing of the Mitchell Street Field Office in Milwaukee.

We continue to believe it is essential that residents of Milwaukee's Southside, which is home to the largest Latino community in the state, continue to have access to in-person services in their neighborhood if SSA proceeds with its plan to close the Mitchell Street location. An average of 2,200 residents visit the Mitchell Street Field Office in person each month. While we understand that SSA intends to serve those 2,200 visitors per month via other existing Milwaukee Field Office locations, we question the viability of that plan given the transportation limitations and language barriers that many of these residents face.

Our concern is shared by the community. There has been an outpouring of concern by local stakeholders in response to SSA's announced plan to close the Mitchell Street Office. With that concern has come a strongly expressed desire to find an alternative Southside location.

From your responses, we understand that the current Mitchell Street Office has safety and accessibility issues that have prompted the move and SSA has been working with GSA to find an alternative space that meets SSA's requirements. With Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett's encouragement, we ask that you formally review the former Forest Home Library located at 1432 West Forest Avenue as a possible alternative SSA Field Office location. We also ask that you come prepared to discuss this and other viable options at our upcoming meeting on March 5, 2018 at the Office of Alderman Jose Perez. In order to meet SSA's tight timeline for the planned closure of the Mitchell Street Office, we have asked Alderman Perez to expand that meeting to include our representatives as well as the offices of Mayor Barrett, State Senator Tim Carpenter, State Representative JoCasta Zamarripa, and Milwaukee Supervisor Peggy West.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests. We look forward to meeting with members of SSA staff to work together to ensure that residents of Milwaukee's Southside continue to have access to a neighborhood location where they can easily access in-person SSA services.

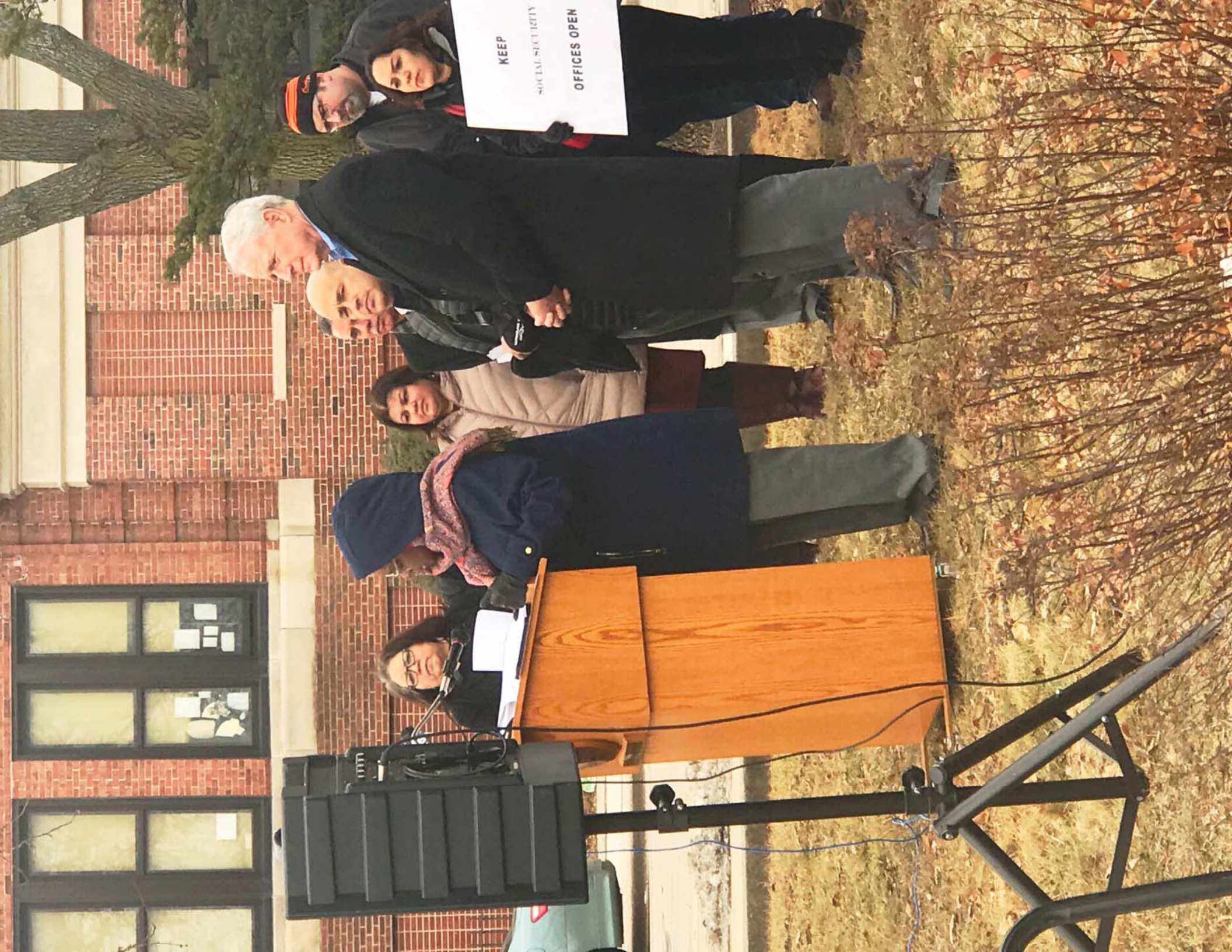
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gwen Moore".

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tammy Baldwin".

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



KEEP
SOCIAL SECURITY
OFFICES OPEN

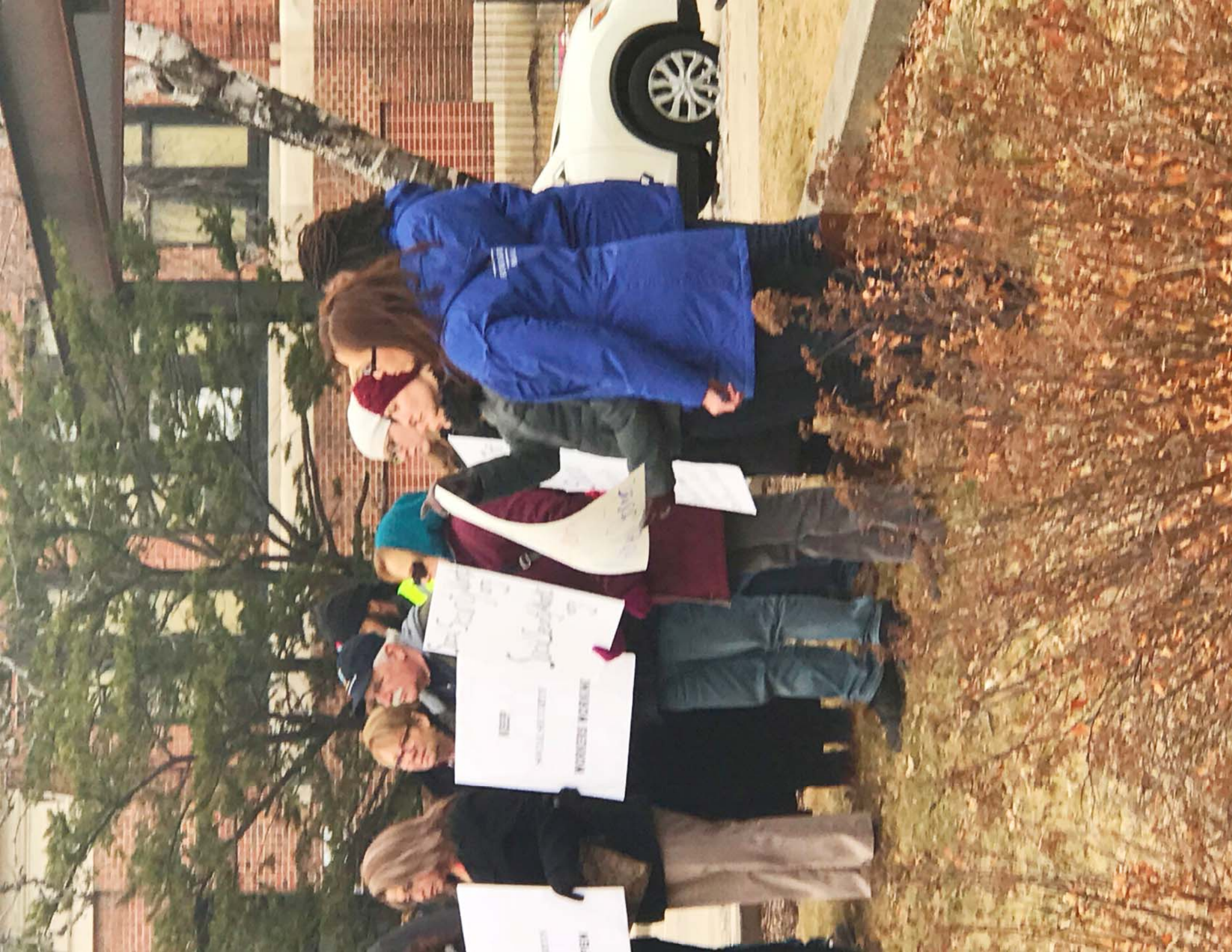


CHC Link

KEEP
OFFICIALS OPEN

KEEP
WORKERS WORKING

Save Our Jobs
for Seniors





Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

March 1, 2018

Mr. John Cooke
Acting Regional Administrator
General Services Administration
230 South Dearborn Street, Suite 3820
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Ms. Phyllis Smith
Regional Commissioner
Social Security Administration
600 W. Madison Street, 10th Floor
Chicago, IL 60661-2406

Dear Mr. Cooke & Ms. Smith:

Last month, representatives of the Social Security Administration contacted city officials and informed them of the federal government's plans to permanently close the Social Security Administration's Mitchell Street office located at 1710 S. 7th Street. As you know, this is the only office located on Milwaukee's Southside. This decision was made without proactive coordination with public stakeholders or intergovernmental partners.

The Mitchell Street office serves over 2,200 individuals each month. We are deeply concerned that the decision to close this office will unduly burden the residents of Milwaukee's Southside who will be forced to travel to an office well outside their neighborhood. For Milwaukee residents without reliable transportation options or the many balancing a demanding work schedule, this closure adds severe barriers to receiving adequate services.

We write to you today in solidarity as organizations who serve Milwaukee's Southside community - a diverse community with a strong bilingual, bicultural population - to request reconsideration of this decision and to ask for an opportunity to discuss alternative spaces that will meet federal requirements while ensuring continued service to our constituents.


As leaders of Wisconsin's largest city, we work with federal and state partners to ensure the maximum availability and accessibility of public services and benefits for all individuals, regardless of one's access to transportation or income levels. As community leaders, we ask that you delay your decision to shutter the Mitchell Street office until the public has sufficient opportunity to weigh in on the importance of this office to not only the Southside community, but also to the greater Milwaukee community

We are eager to work with you and all federal partners to ensure that the Social Security Administration maintains a physical presence on Milwaukee's Southside. If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact Mayor Barrett at (414) 286-6202.

Sincerely,



Tom Barrett
Mayor
City of Milwaukee



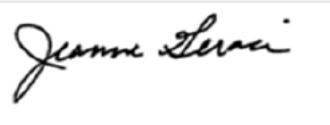
Marcela García
Executive Director
Walker's Point Center for
the Arts



Tammy Rivera
Executive Director
Southside Organizing
Committee



Griselda Aldrete
President & CEO
Hispanic Professionals of
Greater of Milwaukee



Jeanne Geraci
Executive Director
Benedict Center



Katie Sanders
Executive Director
Safe & Sound



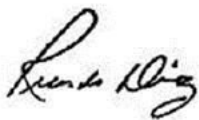
Dr. Michelle Bria
Chief Executive Officer
Journey House



Vincent Lyles
President & CEO
Boys and Girls Club



Brianna Sas-Perez
Executive Director
Layton Boulevard West
Neighbors



Ricardo Diaz
Executive Director
United Community Center



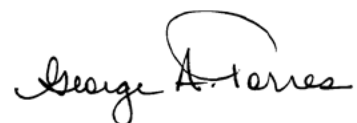
Darryl Morin
Immediate Past National
Vice President - Midwest
LULAC



Dr. Julie Schuller
President & CEO
Sixteenth Street
Community Health Center



Jim Farrell
Development Director
Hope House of Milwaukee



George A. Torres
President & CEO
La Causa, Inc.

cc: Emily W. Murphy, Administrator, U.S. General Services Administration
Nancy A. Berryhill, Acting Commissioner, U.S. Social Security Administration
Brad Flick, Deputy Regional Commissioner, Social Security Administration
Doug M. Nguyen, Regional Communications Director, U.S. Social Security Administration
Chris Churchill, Area Director, U.S. Social Security Administration
Tammy Baldwin, U.S. Senator
Gwen Moore, Member of Congress
Ron Johnson, U.S. Senator
Jose Perez, 12th District Alderman



March 02, 2018

The Honorable Gwen Moore
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Moore:

Thank you for your letters dated January 24, February 6, and February 27, 2018, regarding the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) efforts to locate space for the U.S. Social Security Administration's (SSA) Mitchell Street Office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Your inquiry has been referred to me for response.

In December 2015, at SSA's request, GSA began a lease procurement to find a location for SSA's Mitchell Street office. GSA worked to locate office space that would meet Federal requirements and SSA's long term needs by conducting market searches and surveys and working directly with the city of Milwaukee's Department of City Development.

The locations identified during the search, however, either did not meet minimum space requirements or did not submit an offer. Disclosure of the specific locations GSA evaluated would compromise the past procurement.

After search efforts yielded no results, on January 17, 2018, SSA notified GSA that it would close the Mitchell Street office. On the basis of SSA's decision, GSA terminated the existing lease, effective May 31, 2018, by giving the landlord the required a 120-day notification.

With regard to the 906 West Historic Mitchell Street and 1432 West Forest Avenue locations, GSA does not plan to review additional locations for the SSA Mitchell Street Office since SSA no longer has a need for space.

A similar response has been sent to Senator Baldwin. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me at (202) 501-0563.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Brennan Hart III".

for

P. Brennan Hart III
Associate Administrator

Cc: Phyllis M. Smith, SSA Regional Commissioner



March 2, 2018

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baldwin:

Thank you for your letter dated February 27, 2018, regarding the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) efforts to locate space for the U.S. Social Security Administration's (SSA) Mitchell Street Office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Your inquiry has been referred to me for response.

In December 2015, at SSA's request, GSA began a lease procurement to find a location for SSA's Mitchell Street office. GSA worked to locate office space that would meet Federal requirements and SSA's long term needs by conducting market searches and surveys and working directly with the city of Milwaukee's Department of City Development.

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Sincerely,

(b) (6)

for P. Brennan Hart III
Associate Administrator

Cc: Phyllis M. Smith, SSA Regional Commissioner

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

VICE CHAIR

- Community and Economic Development Committee

MEMBER

- Judiciary and Legislation Committee
- Public Safety and Health Committee



JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

ALDERMAN, 12TH DISTRICT

BOARD MEMBER

- Hispanic Elected Local Officials

MEMBER

- Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Commission
- National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials
- National League of Cities
- Walker's Point Association
- Walker Square Neighborhood Association
- Kinnickinnic River Neighborhood Association

March 12, 2018

Mr. John Cooke
Regional Commissioner, Public Buildings Service
General Services Administration

Dear Mr. Cooke,

By now you know of the great concern that the Social Security Administration's decision to close its Mitchell Street branch office in the City of Milwaukee has caused the affected neighborhood as well as the broader community. What has made matters worse is that those affected feel this decision was made without their input, much less their consent.

As the alderman representing this area, I have called a special community meeting to hear from those that believe they have had no voice in this matter. I would respectfully request – and, if I may, strongly encourage – you to attend this meeting and begin what is an overdue conversation about this matter.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, March 15, 2018, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Keyser Hall, 1730 S. 9th Street, Milwaukee.

Should you have any questions of me, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

José G. Pérez,
Alderman, 12th District